THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) No Sir, the overall growth rates of Industrial Production during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 were 5.6%, 6.6% and 4.0% respectively.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The steps taken to improve industrial production, interalia, are:

1. special package announced for revival of growth in exports;
2. repeal of ULCRA and incentive to house ownership;
3. the Government has allowed buy back of shares and inter-corporate loans to boost investment and revive the capital market;
4. a new power policy announced;
5. excise duties rationalized;
6. income tax rate and custom duties on infrastructure projects reduced;
7. liberalization of inflow of FDI/NRI/OCB investment and the guidelines for foreign equity investment in NBFC have further been modified;
8. setting up of Foreign Investment Implementation Authority (FIIA) to provide single point *interface* between foreign investors and Government machinery;
9. setting up of National Accreditation Boards including a National Patent Office and a National Benchmarking Patent House to promote integration of best practices in the Indian Industry;
10. restoration of 100% MODVAT credit;
11. reduction in CRR;
12. withdrawal of interest rate surcharge on import finance.

Export of Tea

1131. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the export of tea, both in quantity and value, during January to September, 1999;

(b) how it compares with the same period during 1997 and 1998;

(c) the reasons for fall in tea export; and

(d) the steps taken to increase export of tea?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The export of tea in quantity and value terms during January to September, 1999 alongwith corresponding figures for the same period of 1997 and 1998 are as under:-

Period	Quantity (in m.kg)	Value (in Rs. crores)
January to September '99	122.97	1231.03
January to September '98	152.36	1726.57
January to September '97	140.16	1179.87

(c) The reasons for overall decline in exports could be attributed to lower production during the current year, increased domestic demand and country specific factors concerning the major importing countries such as economic crisis in Russian Federation and certain CIS countries, preference for cheaper teas by Poland and paucity of foreign exchange faced by Iran.

(d) Government and the Tea Board have been analysing countrywise exports of tea giving special attention to areas offering potential. Tea Board also acts to remove bottlenecks in exports to individual markets whenever these are noticed. Certain other steps taken to increase exports of tea include:-

(i) participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad;

(ii) field sampling at speciality stores and in principal markets.

(iii) media campaign to increase consumer awareness of the speciality of Indian teas and to popularise the Tea Board marketing symbol which stands for pure Indian tea.

(iv) exchange of tea delegations between India and tea importing countries.